

PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS



WEEKLY REPORT 3-9 SEPTEMBER 2013

Key issues

- Over 70 Palestinians were injured in clashes with Israeli forces across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.
- Four Palestinian-owned structures were demolished, displacing around 30 people.
- In Gaza, significant shortages of fuel and construction materials are impacting service provision and livelihoods.

WEST BANK

Increase in Palestinian injuries during clashes with Israeli forces

A significant increase in the number of Palestinian injuries during clashes with Israeli forces was recorded this week compared to the weekly average of injuries during July-August (72 vs. 28); the majority of this week's injuries were recorded in the Jerusalem area.

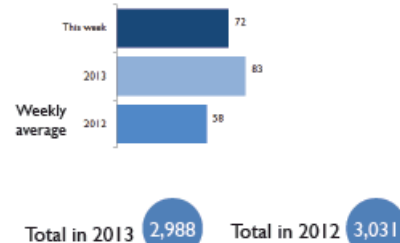
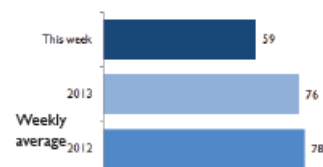
A total of 26 Palestinians and two members of Israeli forces were injured in clashes that took place between 4 and 7 September in and around Al Aqsa Mosque compound/ Temple Mount, in the Old City of East Jerusalem. At least two visits by Israeli groups to the compound, in the context of the Jewish holidays, triggered confrontations with Palestinian worshippers that extended to nearby areas in the Old City. Israeli forces that intervened in the incidents were stoned by Palestinians and responded by firing tear gas canisters, sound grenades and rubber-coated metal bullets. In Abu Dis town, also in the Jerusalem area, another 23 Palestinians were injured, most as a result of tear gas inhalation, in clashes that erupted after an Israeli military jeep was stoned by local residents.

Also this week, ten Palestinians were injured during two weekly demonstrations: against the prolonged closure of one of the main entrances of Kafr Qaddum village (Qalqiliya) and in solidarity with prisoners at the Beituniya checkpoint (Ramallah). Additional weekly protests that evolved into clashes but resulted in no injuries were reported in Ramallah. These included protests against the construction of the Barrier (in Bil'in and Ni'lin villages) and the expansion of Hallamish settlement on land belonging to An Nabi Saleh village.

Finally, four Palestinians were injured in clashes with Israeli forces during search-and-arrest operations in the villages of Beit Ummar (Hebron), Beit Furik and Beita (both in Nablus). While the number of search and arrest operations in recent weeks has remained stable (around 60 per week in July-August), the frequency and intensity of confrontations occurring during such operations, alongside the number of resulting casualties among civilians, has been on the rise, including five fatalities in two incidents during August.

Palestinian Fatalities
by Isr. forces

This week: 0
In 2013 (to date): 14
Equivalent 2012 period: 4

Palestinian Injuries
by Isr. forcesSearch and arrest operations
by Isr. forces

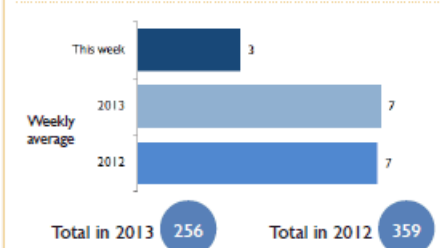
Reduced frequency of settler-related incidents continues

During the week, OCHA recorded three Israeli settler-related incidents affecting Palestinians, of which one led to two injuries and two others led to damage to property. No reports of injuries or damage among settlers were received this week.

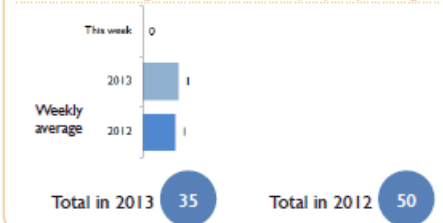
In one incident (on 3 September) in the Old City of Hebron, Israeli settler children physically assaulted two Palestinian children (aged 11 and 12) with sticks while the latter were playing near their own house. In two additional incidents on 5 and 8 September, settlers stoned Palestinian-plated cars traveling near Al Jalazun refugee camp (Ramallah), damaging one vehicle; and cut down ten olive trees belonging to the village of Tuwani (Hebron). Also on 9 September, Palestinians threw a Molotov cocktail at an Israeli bus traveling near 'Abud village (Ramallah); no injuries or damage were reported.

Settler-related violence*

Incidents resulting in Pal. casualties or property damage



Incidents resulting in Isr. casualties or property damage



*Excluding casualties by Israeli forces.

Four structures demolished displacing around 30

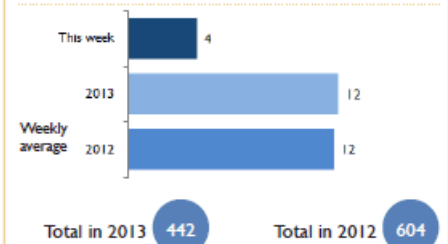
This week, the Israeli authorities demolished three Palestinian-owned structures in the Khan al Ahmar Bedouin community to the east of Jerusalem due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits. The affected structures included two residential tents and an animal shelter, which led to the displacement of 15 people, including eight children. This is one of 20 small herding communities in the hills, east of Jerusalem, in Area C, at risk of forced displacement due to a "relocation" plan advanced by the Israeli authorities.

Another house was demolished by its owner in Jabal al Mukabbir in East Jerusalem after receiving a demolition order on the same grounds; a family of six people, including four children, was displaced.

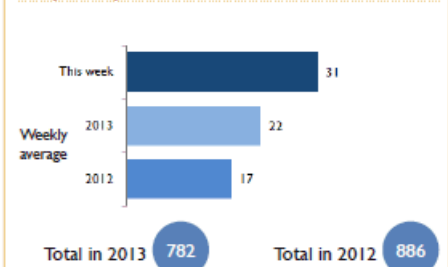
Multiple stop-work and demolition orders were distributed by the Israeli authorities during the week in Area C. One of the orders targeted a water cistern under construction located in Imneizel, a community in South Hebron affected by water scarcity; the cistern has been funded by an international donor and is meant to serve a family of ten.

Demolitions and related displacements

Structures demolished



People displaced



GAZA STRIP

Relative calm in Gaza continues

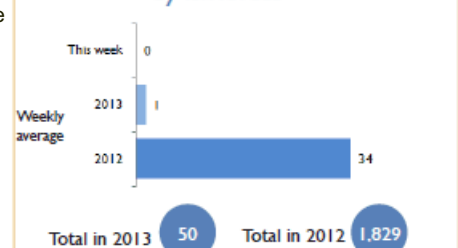
The relative calm in areas along the fence separating Gaza and Israel continued this week, with no reports of casualties. Yet, Israeli restrictions on Palestinian access to land and at sea remained in place and resulted in a number of incidents affecting civilians. On at least four occasions this week, Israeli naval forces opened warning fire towards fishing boats sailing near the 6 nautical miles fishing limit; no injuries or damage were reported. Israeli forces also conducted at least one land-leveling operation near the fence between Israel and the Gaza Strip; and detained four Palestinians in one incident after they reportedly attempted to illegally cross the fence into Israel.

Also this week, one Palestinian rocket was fired from Gaza towards southern Israel; no injuries or damage were reported.

Palestinian Fatalities by Isr. forces

This week: 0
In 2013 (to date): 4
Equivalent 2012 period: 58

Palestinian Injuries by Isr. forces



Reduced tunnel activity leads to shortages and price rises

As part of ongoing measures aimed at countering illegal activities and insecurity in the Sinai, Egyptian forces have continued to demolish smuggling tunnels along its border with Gaza, as well as houses used as entrances to tunnels on the Egyptian side of the border. It is estimated that a maximum of ten tunnels remain operational, down from approximately 300 before June 2013. The illegal tunnels have served as the main channel for the supply of construction materials to Gaza, whose import via the official crossings with Israel remained restricted. They are also the primary entry point for smuggled fuel, which, due to Egyptian subsidies, is significantly cheaper than from Israel.

This week, less than 200,000 liters of fuel per day entered Gaza via the tunnels for all needs, including for the Gaza Power plant (GPP), compared to approximately one million prior to June 2013. As a result, the GPP continued operating at half of its full capacity, triggering long electricity blackouts of up to 12 hours per day. The Palestinian Energy Authority (PENRA) warned that the GPP might shut down completely within days if normal fuel supplies are not resumed, highlighting that fuel reserves at the plant have already been depleted.

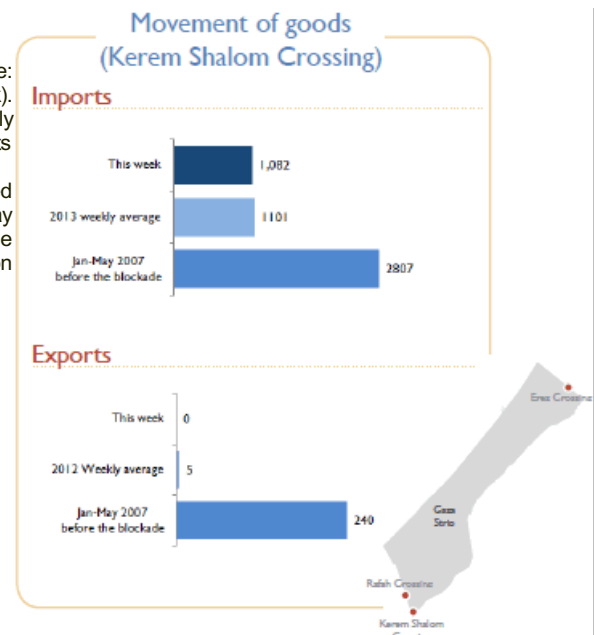
Fuel shortfalls have continued to disrupt the provision of basic services, including water and sanitation, health, and transportation. Due to the prolonged electricity outages recurring in recent years, many basic services in Gaza rely on generators powered by fuel which is now scarce. In addition, the Fuel Stations Owners Association indicated that only fuel imported from Israel is currently available, and sold at double the price of fuel purchased from Egypt. Long queues of vehicles and people are continued to be seen at the operating petrol stations across the Gaza Strip.

The shortage of construction materials in the markets continues. During the reporting period, less than 100 tonnes of construction materials (mainly cement) entered each day to Gaza via the tunnels, compared to a daily average of more than 7,500 tonnes in June 2013, according to the Palestinian Federation of Industries. The resulting shortage has triggered sharp increases in the prices of building materials; the price of cement, for example, has more than doubled. Thousands of workers employed in tunnel smuggling, the construction sector, transport, fishing and agriculture have recently lost all or part of their source of income due to the shrinkage of construction activities triggered by the shortage of basic building materials and fuel.

Restriction on access via Rafah continues

Reduced opening hours at the Egyptian-controlled Rafah Crossing have remained in place: four hours per day (six days per week) compared to nine hours (seven days per week). Access for thousands of people, including patients and students continues to be severely affected as only limited numbers of foreign nationals, people holding visas, and patients officially referred for medical treatment abroad are allowed to cross.

On average this week, at least 150 people crossed into Egypt and around 130 others crossed into the Gaza Strip per day, just 15 per cent of the average number of people crossing per day in June (approximately 1,860). The crossing remains the primary exit and entry point to the Gaza Strip for Palestinians, due to the long-standing, severe restrictions imposed by Israel on movement via the Erez Crossing.



Please note that the figures in this report are subject to changes upon the receipt of additional information.

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